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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Tajikistan remains a vulnerable country and will continue to require the support of the international community in the near term. While on the political and security front the country has shown slow but steady progress, the inability to address structural weaknesses and to achieve significant economic improvement continues to create acute humanitarian problems and to slow the process of post-conflict stabilization in the country. The continuation of the drought in 2001 placed additional strain on the coping mechanisms of households, creating widespread food insecurity. Pervasive poverty amplifies the impact of even small-scale natural disasters, a regular occurrence in Tajikistan. Large sections of society in both urban and rural areas remain critically dependent on international humanitarian assistance.

The work of the international community and the United Nations family, while focusing on the alleviation of immediate needs, has attempted to address some of the underlying causes of poverty with projects and programmes aimed at long-term sustainability. Projects in the 2002 United Nations Consolidated Appeal are designed to integrate immediate humanitarian activities with peace-building efforts and longer-term development strategies. Under the overall guidance of the United Nations Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, mechanisms have been developed to promote cooperation among international aid agencies, donors and the Government with a view to deriving maximum benefit from humanitarian interventions across a broad range of sectors.

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Donor support for Tajikistan in 2001 fell short of the overall requirements. Food donations increased significantly at the end of the year, when Tajikistan's role in facilitating the movement of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan was recognized. It is unclear whether this support will continue in 2002; contributions to this year's Consolidated Appeal have so far been disappointing. The humanitarian community is concerned that the situation in Afghanistan might distract attention from Tajikistan's acute need for assistance to cope with food insecurity, high rates of infectious disease, shortages of clean drinking water and chronic deficiencies in the educational system. Donors are thus encouraged to provide ample support to Tajikistan in meeting the humanitarian needs of its vulnerable populations while moving ahead with its peace-building efforts and economic development.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/10 of 27 November 2001, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Tajikistan and to report to it at its fifty-seventh session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The report covers the period from 15 July 2001 to 22 May 2002.

II. The current situation in Tajikistan and the role of the United Nations political presence in the country

2. Tajikistan has made further significant progress in consolidating peace and stability. This process is carried out against the background of the deep-seated roots of the civil conflict, some of which are still to be addressed. Despite recent internal achievements and regional developments connected to Afghanistan, security concerns remain and are related to organized crime, the significant number of illegal arms in the hands of the civilian population and large-scale drug trafficking. These challenges, along with still insufficient transformative steps towards a market economy and high levels of corruption, are seriously hampering the economic progress of the country.

3. Post-conflict problems and extreme poverty have made the people of Tajikistan heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance. The destruction caused by the civil war (estimated at $7 billion), the collapse of the social security net and the deterioration of public services, combined with a high birth rate, result in low living standards and frustrate the realization of benefits from macroeconomic achievements. In addition, the effects of two consecutive years of drought on people's coping capacity and the damage caused by a number of natural disasters since the beginning of 2002 have pushed the Government to continue seeking international support.

4. Despite numerous obstacles, Tajikistan has demonstrated a firm commitment to peace and stability and has made substantial progress in this respect. Vital laws have been adopted, and some State structures have been reformed. Provisions of the recently drafted Poverty Reduction Strategy still need to be implemented and economic and managerial reforms further stepped up. In order to accomplish these tasks, Tajik society needs and deserves further encouragement and material assistance from the international community, as this is vital in preventing social discontent and the recurrence of civil disorder. Official development assistance and foreign investments are key to achieving sustainable economic growth and further consolidating peace and national reconciliation.

5. In view of its positive role, the Secretary-General, in concurrence with the Government of Tajikistan and the Security Council, has extended the mandate of the United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-building (UNTOP) for another year, until 1 June 2003, to allow it to continue providing the political framework and leadership for post-conflict peace-building activities. Based on a comprehensive peace-building strategy, UNTOP, together with the organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system in Tajikistan, will continue making persistent efforts to mobilize international support for the consolidation of peace, national recovery and reconciliation. It will also focus its activities on the promotion of the rule of law and the strengthening of democratic institutions, and on support for building up national capacity for meeting Tajikistan's international obligations in the area of human rights.

III. Current economic situation

6. Tajikistan remains the poorest of the former Soviet Republics. The recent economic recovery, as reflected in three consecutive years of GDP growth, is yet to have any significant impact on the living standard of the population. Per capita GDP, only $160 in 2001, has dropped by 64 per cent since independence. Some 83 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, with 12 per cent being extremely poor and 5 per cent completely destitute.[1] The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index ranked Tajikistan 103rd out of 162 countries in 2001.[2]

7. The unemployment rate is estimated at 30 per cent,[3] while the average monthly salary is $9. There is evidence that the income of poor households consistently falls below the level of the consumption food basket, which leads to a continuous depletion of assets: by the first quarter of 2002 most households had

exhausted their food stocks and had little ability to purchase food on the market.

8. The scarcity of employment opportunities threatens to push many former combatants towards illegal activities to generate income. Seasonal labour migration is an established coping mechanism; as many as 700,000 persons, mostly men, are estimated to have moved abroad, especially to Russia, looking for work. The number of female-headed households has increased significantly in recent years, as married women are left with their children, often without remittances from their husbands. Female-headed households are less food-secure than other households and have less access to land and irrigation, agricultural tools and services and livestock. The number of war widows, primarily from rural areas (e.g., Khatlon and Gharm), is estimated at more than 25,000. Rural women remarrying as second and third wives have no rights under current official law, making them vulnerable in the context of the current revival of polygamy.

IV. Humanitarian operations

A. Security developments affecting humanitarian relief efforts

9. During the reporting period, the operating environment for humanitarian organizations continued to improve slowly but steadily. Political by-elections took place at the beginning of 2002 without disturbances and with the participation of opposition candidates for the first time since the parliamentary elections in March 2000. At a meeting held in Dushanbe on 15 and 16 June to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan, former members of the Commission on National Reconciliation unanimously recognized the irreversibility of the peace process in the country.

10. Since last winter, serious incidents affecting the international community have included a bomb threat to the main United Nations compound, a death threat to a United Nations consultant, two separate robberies in which staff from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and German Agro Action were held at gunpoint and the murder of an expatriate in front of his apartment. Law enforcement agencies are taking criminal activities that target expatriates very seriously, with the Ministry of Interior, in particular, setting up a special department to prevent and combat these crimes. The main underlying causes of common criminality in Tajikistan are the high rate of unemployment, poverty, drug trafficking and poor socio-economic conditions, with the younger generation especially disaffected. The murders of the State Counsellor to the President on Foreign Policy (18 July 2001) and of the Minister of Culture (8 September 2001) were widely considered to be of a criminal nature rather than political; law enforcement agencies have arrested a number of people implicated in these crimes.

11. The general political climate has been considered positive enough for the United Nations to re-evaluate some of the security measures adopted for its staff and activities. This process led in March 2002 to the termination of the self-imposed United Nations curfew in Dushanbe and the relaxation of the security regime for all districts in the country, except Tavildara. The increased diplomatic representation in the capital since the beginning of the year is also evidence of an improved security environment.

12. The rapidly changing security situation in Afghanistan, which has always been considered a threat to the stability of Tajikistan, has in fact had little impact on the humanitarian situation within the country, as the spillover of hostilities and the anticipated movement of thousands of refugees moving towards its borders did not materialize. However, Tajikistan's proximity to one of the major producers of opium and heroin still has significant security implications, as the country remains a major conduit for illegal narcotics and arms smuggling through Central Asia, causing the security of its southern borders to be continually jeopardized.

13. A deadly challenge is also faced by Tajikistan along its northern border, where the indiscriminate laying of anti-personnel mines has continued to kill and maim innocent civilians; some 52 Tajik citizens and 7 Uzbek nationals have been killed since August 2000.

B. Non-governmental organizations

14. The presence and commitment of non-governmental organizations focused on emergency and development activities has remained stable over the last year, with approximately 25 international and 100

national non-governmental organizations, as well as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, providing humanitarian assistance to the country. Most of their activities are concentrated on the provision of relief to the regions hardest hit by the drought. Interaction between the non-governmental community and the United Nations system is positive and constructive. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) represents the United Nations system at the NGO Forum, a voluntary association of international humanitarian organizations working in Tajikistan.

15. Interaction between the non-governmental organization community and the Government intensified towards the end of 2001, reflecting the new demands brought by the Afghan crisis. The increased international humanitarian presence in Dushanbe resulted in the creation in October of the United Nations-Tajik Coordination Group on Humanitarian Operations to assist relief operations directed to Afghanistan and resolve problems arising from cross-border activities. In September 2001, the Government established an Aid Coordination Unit in the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan to track international humanitarian assistance, but the Unit is still in the process of building its capacity. In March 2002, representatives of the NGO Forum held regular coordination meetings with senior members of key ministries in order to voice concerns, share information and seek clarification on a wide variety of operational matters.

C. Relief food assistance

16. In 2001, Tajikistan faced a severe food crisis due to prolonged drought. Chronic deficiencies in the agricultural sector, such as lack of quality seeds, poor animal health, unclear policies on land use and dilapidated irrigation structures combined with low precipitation levels to seriously affect both agricultural output and household food security, particularly among the disadvantaged strata of the population. Continued prioritization of low-yield cotton production at the expense of cereals is a serious cause of declining cereal production.

17. A crop and food supply assessment undertaken jointly by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in June/July 2001 estimated that national cereal output had declined by 15 per cent over the past year and recommended targeted food assistance for about 1 million vulnerable people. The recommendation was translated into an international appeal by WFP in October 2001. A joint nutritional survey conducted by non-governmental organizations just before winter 2001 in four of the most populous regions of Tajikistan showed a serious deterioration of the nutritional status of children under 5 and their caregivers.

18. WFP continued to provide assistance targeting the drought-affected and most vulnerable populations of the country, distributing in cooperation with its implementing partners more than 63,800 metric tons of various food commodities between July 2001 and May 2002. The WFP Emergency Operation has been extended to December 2002 to allow the distribution of confirmed contributions that have not yet arrived. WFP also continued its focus on rehabilitation and development through its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation, providing support for the agricultural, health and education sectors in line with a commitment to long-term food security activities. Food-for-work projects have been implemented through international organizations to rehabilitate irrigation and water supply systems, as well as to improve health conditions in areas affected by malaria.

19. WFP expanded its school feeding programme to reach more than 293,000 beneficiaries (children and teachers) by the end of May 2002. Encouraging results are already being observed, as attendance in the 1,200 targeted schools is reported to have increased by 9 per cent, with teachers' presence also improving by up to 1[illegible] cent. In the Rasht Valley, where the programme specifically emphasizes promoting education among girls, attendance has increased by more than 20 per cent.

D. Agricultural support

20. Food supply in Tajikistan has been tight over the past three years. The final estimate of the country's 2001 grain production was 283,000 metric tons, leaving a gap of 97,000 metric tons with respect to the total national cereal requirement after allowing for commercial imports. The poor harvest means that fewer seeds will be available for the next planting season. The Ministry of Agriculture estimates that only 26 per cent of the 65,000 metric tons of wheat seed

required annually is available, and there is no capacity to make up the gap through purchases on the international market. The lack of quality certified seeds and the inability of poor farmers to buy costly fertilizers will further limit yields even if weather conditions are favourable in 2002.

21. Humanitarian agencies continued to provide vulnerable farmers with seeds and tools. At the end of 2001, a number of non-governmental and United Nations agencies received funding from the United States Agency for International Development for the procurement of agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilizers), which were distributed to households in drought-affected districts. This has ensured the cultivation of the 2002 crop on some 2,000 hectares of land and will allow the regeneration of high-quality reproductive wheat seeds for households with exhausted coping mechanisms.

22. An irrigation programme sponsored by FAO enabled pumps and drainage canals supporting 30,000 hectares of land to be rehabilitated, thus renewing water supply and management and benefiting especially small private farmers and recipients of vegetable seeds from an earlier spring planting programme.

23. The provision of substantial assistance for small-scale livestock owners also continued. Over 255 veterinarians — supported, equipped and trained by FAO — provided services to some 600,000 mostly privately owned animals at competitive prices. Practical technical advice was also offered to farmers and the rural population through regular radio broadcasts in support of services in the country.

24. Current weather patterns and above-average rainfall seem to suggest that the drought might be over and that cereal production will improve. Another food supply and crop assessment is scheduled to take place in Tajikistan before summer and may confirm better prospects for the 2002 harvest. As the structural problems remain, this improvement is unlikely to boost cereal production if unaccompanied by the provision of inputs and by land reform.

E. Refugee repatriation and support

25. Over the past year the main objectives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were to facilitate the safe return of Tajik refugees, particularly from Commonwealth of Independent States countries, and support their reintegration into society; to protect refugees, asylum-seekers and persons of concern by engaging the Government in dialogue so as to improve their conditions, as well as to provide the most vulnerable with assistance; to provide durable solutions for refugees in the form of resettlement; to continue strengthening the institutional capacity of Government bodies and universities on refugee matters; and to support the repatriation of Afghan refugees and cross-border humanitarian activities in Afghanistan.

26. In the period covered by the present report, UNHCR assisted 1,776 Tajiks to voluntarily return, offering them transportation and cash grants. Reintegration activities provided returnees opportunities for income generation, created access to land and supported them with seeds, fertilizer, livestock and microcredit schemes. UNHCR shifted its focus to microenterprise activities in order to increase food security and family income for returnees. Some 3,355 vulnerable families benefited from cash credit schemes, with special attention given to female-headed households. Activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) since 1999 have supported the psychological rehabilitation needs of abused women and war-affected communities.

27. A new law on refugees, superseding earlier national legislation, was passed in May 2002. The draft of the law prompted UNHCR intervention, as it was found to be in violation of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, to which the Government of Tajikistan is a signatory. Efforts by the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the donor community resulted in some amendments, but the final document does not conform to international standards.

28. Official estimates put at 4,638 the number of refugees in Tajikistan, although the number is likely to turn out to be closer to 3,500, as adverse conditions are pushing them to leave. The number of refugees and asylum-seekers without legal status is increasing, as the Tajik refugee agency, the State Migration Service, is not extending their refugee certificates.

29. In 2002, UNHCR began a joint operation with the International Organization for Migration to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees. In April 2002, in cooperation with OCHA, the Government of

Tajikistan, the Russian border forces, the Afghan authorities and non-governmental organizations, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 8,952 Afghans who had been stranded on the flood plains of the Pyandj River, at the Tajik-Afghan border, since October 2000.

30. UNHCR continued to pursue refugee law and international protection of refugees through a number of activities aimed at building capacity within Government institutions and non-governmental organizations dealing with refugee issues. Technical assistance and legal expertise were offered to the State Migration Service, border authorities, police and judiciary, as well as to the Tajik State University and national non-governmental organizations.

F. Health and nutrition

31. Budget expenditures for the health sector in Tajikistan are extremely low ($1.50 per capita per annum), as are the salaries of medical workers ($4.50 per month). Inadequate State financing and the introduction of informal fees for most medical services have resulted in limited access for the poor. The situation is especially serious in rural areas, where the lack of staff, essential drugs, medical and diagnostic equipment and regular water supply is particularly severe.

32. Between 1995 and 2000 the incidence of disease in the country increased by 80 per cent for the adult population and by even more for children. The most widespread diseases are of the infectious and parasitic type, many of which have exceeded their epidemic threshold. Psychic disorders, a remnant of the civil conflict, are also a serious concern. Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases pose an increasingly serious health threat.

33. The inaccessibility and poor quality of health services threaten the survival of children and women. Infant, child and maternal mortality rates remain high, while the increasing number of home childbirths without medical assistance (41 per cent nationally) is a particularly worrisome trend. The preliminary results of a national nutritional survey conducted in May 2002[4] confirmed chronic malnutrition among children between 6 and 59 months of age, with a large number considered "at risk". Inadequate food intake is considered to be a primary cause of anaemia among all pregnant women and in more than 50 per cent of children.

34. The continuous humanitarian and technical assistance provided by the international community in recent years has prevented the complete collapse of the health-care system in Tajikistan and supported the Government's efforts to improve the health status of the Tajik people. The Extended Programme of Immunization has helped reduce the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases. No polio cases have been reported over the last year, while malaria and typhoid incidence decreased by 40 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively, in 2001.

35. The Government of Tajikistan has approved the concept of health-care reform through 2010 proposed by the Ministry of Health with the assistance of the World Health Organization (WHO), and a law on drugs and pharmaceutical activity has also been adopted. With technical and financial support from WHO, the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and the World Bank, the Ministry of Health is actively restructuring and rationalizing health services in five pilot zones and introducing a primary health-care service based on family physicians and nurses. WHO was able to support the Ministry of Health in the early detection and treatment of malaria plasmodium carriers, the preparation of new health-policy and reform documents, the improvement of managerial capacity in the field of reproductive health and building capacity for international coordination, emergency preparedness and contingency planning.

36. In collaboration with WHO, UNICEF continued to help the Government improve the well-being of Tajik children, launching three reproductive health initiatives and certifying three maternity hospitals in the Sughd region as "baby-friendly".

37. The Ministry of Health also benefited from the continued support offered by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in strengthening reproductive health information and services and in upgrading the management capacity of the National Reproductive Health Centre. Under its population and development strategies programme, UNFPA initiated the formulation of a national population policy in December 2001 and has launched a demographic survey.

G. Support for women's initiatives in peace-building and national reconciliation

38. UNIFEM has been supporting innovative approaches for enhancing women's participation in the political process of peace-building during the transition period, facilitating women's economic advancement and promoting women's rights to land. Support given to a national non-governmental organization has resulted in the provision of training on gender awareness and the prevention of violence against women, the establishment of gender-studies curricula across the country and the promotion of changes to gender stereotypes negatively affecting women in the media. Women entrepreneurs are helped to develop effective advocacy tools to improve the environment for small business by addressing economic policy at all levels of Government through a joint project with the Association of Businesswomen of Tajikistan. Several assessments of women's rights to land in the process of land distribution, including a rural-women's needs assessment, a gender review of land-related legislation and legal practice in cooperation with the OSCE office in Tajikistan, and an institutional assessment of actors working on women's land-rights issues will provide the basis for future UNIFEM activities.

H. Water and sanitation

39. Sixty per cent of the population collects water from open sources that does not meet required standards of quality.[5] More than 50 per cent of the water samples analysed by Government authorities in the region of Khatlon during the first quarter of the year have been reported contaminated. UNICEF estimates that in 2001 there were 1,331 cases of typhoid and 26,284 cases of diarrhoea in this region. A comprehensive assessment carried out in July and August 2001 in the most drought-affected areas resulted in a Drought Recovery Plan emphasizing the rehabilitation of water supply and environmental sanitation in the regions of Sughd and Khatlon. Awareness activities have accompanied rehabilitation efforts, and UNICEF targeted 40 schools in two border districts to promote hygiene education. Together with Government counterparts, it has completed the national level of the planning process for a long-term water supply and environmental sanitation programme that will be supported by regional steering committees. Due to the large number of actors in the sector, particularly in the Khatlon region, enhanced coordination is being promoted to rationalize interventions of the international community.

40. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme continued to rehabilitate water-supply facilities in several regions of the country in order to provide communities with safe drinking water and restore crucial infrastructure for irrigation. UNDP continued cross-border conflict-prevention activities, which in the Batken province of neighbouring Kyrgyzstan took the form of rehabilitation of the drinking-water supply.

I. Education

41. Poverty is affecting children's access to education, as impoverished families are not able to afford basic supplies, clothing and footwear for children to attend school. The education system's performance worsened during the 1990s as a result of a shrinking budget, low salaries, teachers abandoning the profession, the lack of textbooks and the destruction of infrastructure during the civil war. Nearly 20 per cent of schools were destroyed,[6] and about 1,000 buildings are now in need of full or partial repair. The Ministry of Education's share of the budget decreased sharply from 11.8 per cent in 2000 to 3 per cent in 2001.

42. UNICEF continued to support the education sector by assisting a large number of schools in selected districts with the provision of winter clothing and coal to heat classrooms so as to ensure the attendance of pupils through the cold winter months. The "child-friendly school" has been introduced to improve the scholastic environment, to reduce non-attendance and drop-out rates and to encourage community and parental participation in school life. Studies to assess the trends in girls' access to education, to verify current attendance levels and to measure learning achievements among children have been conducted jointly by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNICEF and local parents, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

J. Child protection

43. Many families have been placed under considerable strain as economic decline, successive crop failures and water shortages have increasingly stretched their coping capacity. The extra efforts needed to make ends meet have left parents unable to nurture and supervise their children. Divorces, separation, drug use, domestic violence and child abandonment are on the rise, and children abandon school to help their families or end up living on the street. Children in need of care end up crowding special institutions where Government services are usually unable to respond adequately to their most basic health and psychological needs.

44. UNICEF has placed emphasis on supporting relevant State structures so as to improve conditions in the above-mentioned institutions and helping the Government to search for alternative care approaches. In collaboration with UNICEF, the Government has prepared a summary report on children in need of special protection measures and commissioned an in-depth review of Tajik legislation in order to create the legal space for alternative approaches to institutional care. UNICEF has refurbished three institutes for disabled children, providing room heaters, bed linen, school supplies and toys and games.

K. Rehabilitation and development

45. The UNDP Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme is making significant contributions to the social and economic recovery in four regions of Tajikistan. Projects have been initiated in the following sectors: agriculture, health and sanitation, water development, gender, education, infrastructure, energy, private sector and small and medium enterprise development, and institution-building. These projects contribute to poverty reduction in all groups, the reintegration of returnees and former combatants in areas of resettlement, the restoration of basic conditions for economic growth, the promotion of stability and the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable human development.

46. Reintegration programmes in the Karategin Valley and in the Shartuz and Kofarnihon districts have created short-term employment opportunities for more than 3,700 ex-combatants, encouraging their reintegration in the community, positively benefiting their families and further reinforcing the peace-building process. Former combatants have acquired specific professional skills that will help them to gain more permanent employment. In Kofarnihon, following a request of the Tajik Government and UNTOP, UNDP continued to rehabilitate a secondary school and central district hospital.

47. The Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme has promoted good governance and transparency through the establishment and strengthening of community-based development organizations to address community priorities and needs in three regions of the country. Communities have benefited from technical and managerial training and capacity-building, which helps them take full responsibility for the completed projects in order to make them sustainable. Through its work with local communities, the Programme has helped not only to establish a sense of ownership and common responsibility but also to decrease tension among various ethnic groups.

48. Recognizing that agriculture remains the foundation of the Tajik economy, and that three quarters of the population lives in rural areas, UNDP has supported private farmer associations that strengthen private farming by rehabilitating and managing local irrigation and drainage systems, as well as by providing credits.

49. Many activities in the small and medium enterprise sector focused on women, who constitute one of the economically vulnerable groups. UNDP supported the access of women to microcredits both through the Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme and by mobilizing additional resources for a local non-governmental organization called Gender and Development.

L. Drug control and drug abuse

50. The quantity of drugs trafficked across the Tajik-Afghan border has grown. Opium, morphine and heroin pass through Tajikistan to reach other countries in Central Asia, as well as Russia, Western Europe and to some extent the United States of America. During 2001 and the first quarter of 2002, nearly 10 tons of drugs was seized in the country, half of it heroin. Although the bulk of such narcotics is in transit through the

country, a certain amount is consumed locally; according to official statistics the number of drug addicts increased by 53 per cent from 2000 to 2001, with the drug of choice being heroin for 75.5 per cent of registered addicts.

51. The Tajik Drug Control Agency and the Russian Federal Border Service Group have been the agencies seizing the bulk of heroin and other drugs under projects implemented for the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP). A regional precursor control project is currently being implemented in Tajikistan, while ODCCP, in cooperation with the Drug Control Agency, has promoted public awareness through media outlets about the individual and social harm caused by drug trafficking and drug abuse.

V. Assistance provided by Member States

52. Member States provided $58.5 million in response to the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2001, or 75 per cent of the revised requirements. Major donors included the United States of America, Japan, Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom. Contributions outside the framework of the Appeal, as reported by donors and agencies to OCHA, amounted to $16.8 million. In addition, the World Bank has allocated $33.8 million worth of credit and grants since July 2001 for policy-based lending, institution-building, agriculture, emergency assistance programmes and the social sector. In 2001, the Asian Development Bank allocated $40 million for the agricultural sector and intends to allocate another $40 million for road rehabilitation and the social sector in 2002. ECHO has allocated approximately €15 million since July 2001 in support of health, food security and food aid programmes. In addition, the Directorate-General for Development allocated €4 million for food security programmes to be implemented by ECHO partners in 2002-2003.

53. The United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2002 seeks a total of $76 million for programmes and projects in the following sectors: food security, health and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, education, reintegration, coordination and security. The strategy and projects covered by the Appeal aim to reach a total target population of 1.36 million. As of 5 June 2002, some $43 million, including a substantial carry-over from 2001, had been contributed by the international community towards the 2002 Appeal, most of it consisting of food aid for WFP programmes. Vital sectors such as health and education remained unfunded.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

54. **During the past year Tajikistan has made further progress in consolidating peace and stability in the country. However, the deep-seated roots of the conflict have not been eradicated, and the security environment remains fragile and unpredictable. The population continues to have one of the lowest living standards among the countries of the former Soviet Union, combined with high unemployment and the virtual collapse of the social security net. The efforts of the Government and the assistance provided by the United Nations have been crucial to covering the immediate emergency needs and to mitigating the effects of the two-year drought on vulnerable households. The engagement of the international humanitarian community has also helped to prevent further deterioration of the population's living standard. Food aid has continued to be the main form of assistance offered by the international community to Tajikistan; more attention is needed to make improvements in other important sectors, such as health, water and environmental sanitation, and education.**

55. **The main humanitarian and rehabilitation objectives of the United Nations in 2002 are to initiate a sustainable improvement of food security; to improve access to primary health care and other basic social services; and to contribute to social rehabilitation, particularly through capacity-building within communities and the creation of employment opportunities.**

56. **Gradual improvements in the political and security environment and the limited economic recovery made by Tajikistan in the past few years have yet to make an impact on the widespread poverty of the population. Welcome evidence that the period of drought might be over does not per se reduce the vulnerability of households, as the impact of the past two years on the living standard of the population will still be felt for some time. The**

chronic structural problems affecting the country and its population have not been resolved and will continue to cause urgent humanitarian needs in most sectors. I would therefore encourage donors to contribute generously to the humanitarian, development and peace-building activities of the United Nations system and its partners in Tajikistan, in particular the programmes outlined in the 2001 Consolidated Appeal.

57. **Since the question of emergency international assistance for Tajikistan was first placed on the agenda of the General Assembly, the situation in the country has stabilized considerably and humanitarian developments are evolving less rapidly than during and immediately after the civil conflict. The Assembly may thus wish to consider reviewing this agenda item on a biennial rather than an annual basis, in keeping with the pace of developments.**

Notes

[1] World Bank "Republic of Tajikistan Poverty Assessment", 29 June 2000, based on the World Bank/UNDP Tajikistan Living Standards Survey 1999.

[2] UNDP *Tajikistan Human Development Report* 2001.

[3] World Bank estimate.

[4] Coordinated by Action Against Hunger.

[5] Government of Tajikistan sources.

[6] International Monetary Fund and World Bank surveys.